

Message Text

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ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01

INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 /072 W

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R 061135Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3336

INFO AMEMBASSS ABIDJAN

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY LOME

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MONROVIA

AMEMBASSY NIAMEY

AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USDEL JEC PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 2493

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, OTRA, FR, UK, XA, VS

SUBJECT: TRAVEL OF DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER TRAN VAN DON

REF: SAIGON 210

1. DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER TRAN VAN DON PLANS TO VISIT ZAIRE, TOGO, NIGER, UPPER VOLTA AND LIBERIA DURING MARCH. GOOD-WILL VISITS ARE DESIGNED TO MAKE UP FOR COUNTRIES FOREIGN MINISTER BAC WAS FORCED TO CANCEL WHEN HE CUT SHORT HIS DECEMBER-JANUARY TOUR BECAUSE OF THE COMMUNIST MILITARY OFFENSIVE AT THAT TIEM (REFTEL), I.E. ZAIRE, LIBERIA AND TOGO; PLUS ADDITIONAL STOPS IN NIGER AND UPPER VOLTA. DON WILL BE CARRYING PERSONAL MESSAGES FROM PRESIDENT THIEU FOR THE RESPECTIVE CHIEFS OF STATE. HE WILL BE ACCOMPANIED BY ONE AIDE, LIEUTENANT COLONEL LE VAN KHAN.

2. DON WILL LEAVE SAIGON MARCH 9 FOR PARIS, AND FROM THERE WILL
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PROCEED TO AFRICA ON ROUGHLY THE FOLLOWING SCHEDULE: ZAIRE MARCH

9-16, TOGO MARCH 16-19, NIGER MARCH 19-22, UPPER VOLTA MARCH 22-25, LIBERIA MARCH 25-28. PRECISE ITINERARY IS BEING COORDINATED BY GVN EMBASSY LONDON THROUGH AMB LONG IN ZAIRE, AMB TRAN IN LIBERIA, AND AMB LOC IN ABIDJAN FOR THE OTHER THREE COUNTRIES. MFA SOURCE INDICATES SO FAR NO PRECISE TIMING HAS BEEN AGREED WITH ANY HOST COUNTRY AND THAT SCHEDULING PROBLEMS ARE EXPECTED.

3. DON HAS ASKED US TO INFORM EMBASSIES IN HOST COUNTRIES IN ADVANCE AS HE WOULD LIKE TO CALL ON AMBASSADORS R DCM'S DURING HIS VISIT. HE WOULD APPRECIATE THEIR ADVICE ABOUT THE LOCAL SCENE AND PERHAPS THEIR SUGGESTIONS AS TO ADDITIONAL CALLS HE SHOULD MAKE.

4. DON WAS ONE OF THE LEADERS F THE COUP THAT OVERTHREW PRESIDENT DIEM IN 1963 BUT WAS RETIRED AS A LIEUTENANT GENERAL IN THE MID-SIXTIES IN CONNECTION WITH ONE OF THE FREQUENT LEADERSHIP CHANGES THAT TOOK PLACE IN THAT PERIOD. HE WAS A SENATOR 1967-70 AND HAS BEEN A MEMBER OF THE LOWER HOUSE SINCE 1971. HE SPEAKS FLUENT FRENCH AND ADEQUATE ENGLISH.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 06 MAR 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: buchandr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975SAIGON02493
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750079-0596
From: SAIGON
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750376/aaaacqjq.tel
Line Count: 82
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 SAIGON 210
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: buchandr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 13 MAY 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <13 MAY 2003 by ElyME>; APPROVED <07 OCT 2003 by buchandr>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: TRAVEL OF DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER TRAN VAN DON
TAGS: OVIP, FR, UK, XA, VS, (TRAN VAN DON)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006